

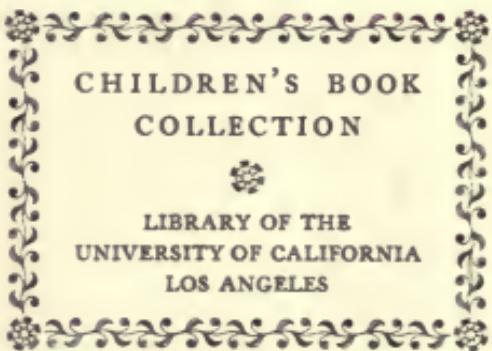
THE  
**LITTLE GIRL**  
WHO WAS  
**TAUGHT BY EXPERIENCE.**



**BOSTON,**  
BOWLES AND DEARBORN, 72 WASHINGTON STREET.

Isaac R. Butts & Co. Printers.  
1827.

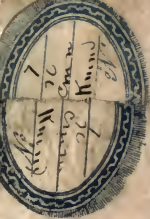
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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, *to wit :*

*District Clerk's Office.*

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JNO. W. DAVIS, { *Clerk of the District of  
Massachusetts.*

THE  
**LITTLE GIRL**  
WHO WAS  
**TAUGHT BY EXPERIENCE.**

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LITTLE Lucy's mother had died when she was a very small child ;—this was a great misfortune to Lucy, for her mother loved her very tenderly, and she would have taken the trouble to tell her what she did wrong, and when she *felt* wrong, and would have taught her to correct all her faults ; she would have taught her that happiness could not dwell in her heart, while she permitted wicked passions to rise up and grow strong there, any more than the beautiful flowers which she planted in

her little garden-bed, could thrive and bloom when she allowed all the rank weeds which sprang up with them, to become strong and remain there to choke them: wicked passions like troublesome weeds, grow very fast, and they soon root out all the mild, gentle virtues which are just budding into beauty, if we do not take great pains to check them, and pluck them out of our hearts.

Lucy's mother would have taught her all this, for she saw these evils were already springing up to destroy the lovely blossom of virtue in her young bosom; but she died, and Lucy was left to the care of a most indulgent father; he did not like to correct his little girl, for he only saw her when his busy day was over, and then he wished to gratify all her desires, to fondle over her and play with her and

bless her while he thought of her dear mother whom he had lost; he did not see her faults the little time he was with her, the servants did not like to tell him of them, and poor Lucy was growing up a *vain*, selfish, self-willed, prying little girl, with an obstinate temper which could bear no contradiction.

Lucy had a *pretty face* and her father and the servants talked to her so much about it, that at last she really thought it was something good in her to be pretty, that she was in some way better because she was handsomer than other little girls; no kind friend ever said to Lucy, “that as she had not made her own face, she could not be more good for its being a pretty one; and that as she could not by any care keep it a moment, if it should please her heavenly Father to take it away, that it was very silly in her to be vain of it, and value

it so much ; but that she could do a great deal, to make herself good, and amiable, and obliging, and affectionate ; and therefore she would be more dear to her friends and more happy in herself every time she even tried to correct a wrong feeling.”

It was a *sad* thing that Lucy had no one to teach her all these things, for she might have learnt them easily then, and she was growing more selfish, and vain, and obstinate, and disobedient as she grew older, she thought a great deal about her dress, fine things to wear, and nice food to eat, and she liked to pry into things which did not concern her to know.

Lucy had an aunt living in Boston, who was a sensible and a very kind-hearted woman, she heard that Lucy would become a disagreeable if not a wicked child, if some friend did not have

compassion and try to save her from her growing faults. She kindly sent to Lucy's Father who lived in New York, and persuaded him to let his daughter come and pass one year with her ; she had a little girl of her own about the same age as Lucy, who had been watched, and guarded, and taught by this kind mother, and she was now a lovely child, so good—obedient—and amiable, that every one who knew her, saw that she would grow up a blessing to her family and friends ; her mother had early taught her, and made her feel from experience, that she was always happier when she governed her temper, corrected a fault, and thought more about making others happy than she did of pleasing herself ; she told her that her heavenly Father always looked down with peculiar love upon her, when she resisted a wicked feeling

or a selfish action, and sent his *best* and sweetest reward of peace and joy into her heart, a reward he bestows only on goodness, but which is more delightful than any pleasure which the wicked can purchase. Now the little Emily had already learned to feel this delightful peace, and she would give up any thing to obtain it.

It was on her birth day morning, about a month after Lucy's arrival at her aunt's, that she received a very kind letter from her father enclosing two beautiful crown pieces which he said "he thought would be an acceptable present for herself and cousin, and he hoped this would make his little darlings happy." Lucy *did* feel happy for one moment, and she looked at the pretty shining pieces again and again, then she began to feel dissatisfied, and went slowly and with a sullen counte-

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nance, into the parlour where Emily was finishing her work.

“My father has sent me these two crown pieces,” said she, “but he says I must give one of them to you, Emily, I’m sure I don’t know what for;” and Lucy looked unhappy, and selfish, and sour, because she could not keep both the pieces which her father had sent, and no one who had seen Lucy then would have thought she could ever have a pretty face; the naughty temper in her heart, looked out at her eyes, her scowling brows, and her pouting lips, and made her quite disagreeable, as she threw down the piece of silver upon the table with a loud noise.

“Oh how good your dear father is,” said Emily, “what a beautiful bright piece it is—but do not give it to me, dear Lucy, if you don’t wish to,” continued she, as she looked up at Lu-

cy's unhappy face, "I should like to have it to be sure, because I am saving all my money for a particular purpose, 'tis to get poor nurse Hooper a new gown, mother says she has not been to meeting all this summer because she has had nothing decent and whole to wear, and she told me that if I would save all my money till I had enough I should have the pleasure of getting her one my own self; and I should be so delighted to see how happy she would look, for mother says all the pleasure nurse has is going to meeting; we you know go to dancing,—and learn music—and read entertaining books—and have a great many pleasures, but poor old nurse never leaves off hard work from morning to night, laboring with all her strength—only when as *she* calls it 'the blessed day of rest comes;'—how I should like to

get her a nice new pretty gown, and see her walking along to meeting with it on, and her psalm book and fan wrapped up neatly in her clean checked handkerchief as she used to last year. But," added she, as she looked a *second* time at Lucy's sour face, "not if you don't wish to give me the money Lucy."

"But I must give it to you, I suppose, if I do not like to," said Lucy, "for papa will ask you when he comes next week what you did with it and all about it, and I know you will tell him, 'tis just like you."

"If he asks me I must tell him, you know Lucy, I can't help it, can I; but if he does not ask me, I will not tell him any thing about it, if you don't wish me to."

"Oh but I know he will ask you, so you may as well have it, and spend it

too as foolishly as you choose ; I know what I shall do with *mine* though, I will buy that pretty pair of silk slippers which I saw at Miss Rust's yesterday, and wished for so much, and I will wear them with my new silk frock with Barage trimmings, when we go next week to Brookline, for there I shall see that proud Miss Prince again, with all her fine clothes ;—she thought nobody could dress as smart as she did, but I will show her that I can,”—and Lucy began to smile with pleasure at the thought of mortifying Miss Prince.

“ But I would not dress so much just to go out to Mrs. Russel's,” said Emily, “ we shall wish to walk out in the grounds, and you will be obliged to take so much care not to hurt your dress, you will not have half the pleasure ; how can you jump about the grass, and gather flowers ? ”

“I dont care for that,” said Lucy, “I will wear the gown and the slippers too. Papa always lets me dress as I like. I shall take care enough.”

Emily did not say any thing more, but she ran away to show her mother her present, and to ask her if she would be so kind as to tell her what sort of a gown she should get for Nurse Hooper, and to count over all the silver pieces she hoarded in her purse. Her mother told her she was much pleased to find she remembered the poor friendless old woman, and that she should have the pleasure of getting the gown the next day,—and she said she would advise her all about it. Then her mother counted her money and found she would have some left after the gown was bought, which she could spend for herself. Lucy said she would not determine what she should do with it

then, but put it away till she wanted something very much. Her mother told her that was a very prudent and wise determination.

The day at last came for their visit to Brookline, the carriage was ordered, and Emily came down with her plain Cambric slip and thick shoes, which looked very proper, and comfortable, and neat. But Lucy put on her trimmed silk dress, and the lilac satin slippers she had bought to wear with it.

“Why my little girl,” said her aunt, as she came into the room, “what could induce you to put on that rich silk to day? you can have no enjoyment of play in such a dress, and those delicate slippers too,—you cannot *walk* in them; remember we are going into the country, and shall wish to taste the sweet air of the fields, you had better

run and change your dress now my love, there is quite time enough, and Emily will go and assist you."

"O no, aunt," said Lucy, "I had rather not go at all, than do that, I shall take care, I am big enough to take care I hope;" and she again looked sullen and sour.

"I shall not compel you my dear, most certainly, because that would not convince you that you are wrong, but I advise you once more to go and change your dress for a more proper one; I warn you that you will not have half the comfort, but a vast deal more trouble in going as you are; I wish indeed that you could believe, that I must know better than yourself about such things, because it might save you from much suffering, but if you prefer to learn by your own experience, you certainly shall;—experience is an excel-

lent instructor, but we often pay very dearly for her lessons: well what do you say?"

"I am not at all afraid," said Lucy, impatiently. "Papa always lets me dress as I like."

"Let us go then," said her aunt.

The day was balmy and mild as possible, and the ride to Brookline was without accident, and perfectly pleasant. Lucy forgot all that her aunt had said, she was thinking how all the company would admire her fine dress and how mortified, and vexed, and surprised, the proud Miss Prince would be. At last they reached the beautiful seat of Mrs. Russel, and were received most kindly by that excellent lady. But what can express Lucy's disappointment to find there was to be no one besides themselves, not even Miss Prince, whom she was so sure of meeting, and that after

Mrs. Russel had permitted a smile of pity to pass over her face as she looked at her dress, there was no more notice taken of it in any way.

Presently a walk in the garden was proposed, and they all proceeded to view the grounds. Emily went skipping about with a heart light with innocence and peace, smelling the sweet flowers, and eating the rich fruit which was ripening in profusion around her ; —Lucy also took some fruit for she was very fond of it, and she thought she eat it very carefully ; but presently she felt something wet upon her arm, and when she looked to see what it was she found she had dropped some of the juice on the front part of her dress, which had already taken out the color in several places.

Now this was her best and her favorite dress, it was a present from her

father when she left New York to visit her aunt, and it was quite new. She felt very uncomfortable at this sad sight, and she already began to wish she had not put it on :—however she could do nothing to it, and she continued to walk slowly and carefully through the shrubs and flowers, until she saw the party all collected round a fish-pond at the bottom of the garden, viewing something very attentively.

“O the beautiful gold fish,” exclaimed Lucy, “I had quite forgotten to ask about them, I dare say they are in that pond, and I do long to see them,” and away she ran with all her speed, thinking only of the pretty gold fish which Emily had told her about so often ; but the wind filled out the light folds of her beautiful silk dress, and as she pased a turning in the walk, the trimming was caught by the briars of a rose-bush

and torn almost entirely off, before she could stop herself. Lucy stood aghast at this sad rent ! the delicate trimming was quite in tatters, and the thought of what her aunt had said to her (for she now remembered it every word) made her ashamed to look her in the face ; however, she pinned it on as well as she could, and again she walked slowly and carefully, quite forgetting the gold fish and every thing but her misfortunes and her shame, and wishing she had not been so self-willed and perverse. But when little children will not be guided by the experience and judgment of their best and wisest friends, and will try for themselves, they often learn through much suffering and trouble, and pay dearly for the instruction which they might have had for nothing.

While Lucy was thus sauntering

along, one of Mrs. Russel's little girls came running up to her full of spirits. "Come with *us* dear Lucy," said she, "we are going to the bottom of the pasture-field to look into Mr. Barrel's beautiful garden, 'tis much handsomer than ours, and there is an opening in the fence so that we can see it all plainly through the cracks. There are a great *many* images in the garden. In one place there is an old woman feeding chickens, and she is holding up her apron of corn so naturally, exactly as our Betsey does when she feeds our little ones; and her gown is pinned away behind her, and shews her quilted petticoat and she *does* look so funny; and then in another part of the garden, there is a man raking hay, he looks as natural as *life*—come—this way, my dear, there is Emily just jumping over the stone-wall."

The pasture was very large. It was made perfectly dry by a ditch which was dug along on one side ; this drained off all the water, so it was easy and dry walking. The girls went on jumping and springing, and Lucy once more forgot her troubles, and began to enjoy herself, while Emily felt so innocent and happy, that she could not express her delight. They came at last to the opening in the fence which gave them a good view of this fine garden ; the flower beds were all laid out in squares, and diamonds, and circles, which were all bordered with beautiful green box. And Lucy saw the old man with his rake, who looked exactly as if he could move and was just going to turn his hay ; and she saw the droll looking old woman holding up her apron of corn ; and they were very much amused, discovering new beauties in this garden for

a long time, but at last they were startled by hearing the snorting of a horse very near to them. They had not seen that there was any horse in the pasture before, but when they looked up they saw Mr. Russel's great black horse galloping up to them, rearing and kicking up his hind feet in the air, while John the stable-boy was running after him with a halter to catch him.

The little girls were very much frightened when they saw such a great loose horse so near to them, and they began to run towards the house as fast as their limbs would carry them, for they thought the black horse was close at their heels, and they did not stop to look behind them. Sarah Russel and Emily got on a great deal faster than Lucy, because her slippers were tight and her dress troublesome, but she used her utmost speed, and had nearly reach-

ed the stone wall over which the girls were jumping, when in attempting to leap across the ditch her foot slipped in, and down came poor Lucy flat upon her face. What a sad situation she was in! she had lost her shoe in the black muddy ditch,—her unfortunate silk frock was all covered with green slime, from the slippery grass on the banks,—she had hurt her ankle so badly she could scarcely stir,—and she expected every moment that the great black horse would be upon her, and trample her to death,—the other little girls thinking she had kept up with them had jumped over the wall and were gone out of sight and hearing, and she could not possibly get up alone.

“Oh! dear, what shall I do?” cried Lucy, “will nobody come to save me.”

Now it happened that young Mr. Thomas Russel had come out to assist

John in catching his horse, (because he was a frolicksome and troublesome horse to catch) and he was already so near that he heard Lucy's cries. He came to her, kindly took her up and quieted her fears, and showed her that the horse was a long way distant, and then he felt with his stick round in the ditch to find her beautiful lilac slipper. Alas ! it was beautiful no longer ; for when he fished it out of the muddy gutter on the end of his cane, it was so filled and covered with the filth that no color could be seen. Mr. Russel kindly carried her in his arms to the house, and then he took her slipper to the pump and pumped upon it till he got it clean enough to dry at the fire. An old shoe of Sarah Russel's was found for Lucy to put on, after her stockings and her clothes had been wiped, but it was much too large for her to walk in, if she had been in a condition to walk.

While the rest of the party were enjoying the garden, the summer house, the shrubbery and the lawn, eating fruit and gathering flowers, poor Lucy, placed in a chair by a roasting kitchen fire to dry, her beautiful dress *tattered* and *filthy*, her fine satin slippers quite and *entirely* ruined, her face bruised, and her ankle lame, had time to feel all her folly and perverseness.

“If,” said she to herself, “I had not been so self-willed and so very silly as to put on this silk dress, any other, even my best muslin, might have been washed and repaired, and if I had only worn my thick, easy shoes, I should not have slipped at all; and if I had slipped, any other shoes but *these* might have been made tolerably clean again; but now my beautiful silver crown might as well have been thrown into the sea, for it is *all* gone and has only purchased

pain and disgrace. O how ashamed I shall feel to look at aunt and Emily, for they both told me almost exactly how it would be if I would wear this improper dress, though aunt did not know that I wanted to wear it just to vex that proud Miss Prince; and after all she was not here to see it, and will only rejoice to hear of my mortification and disgrace. I dare say that Emily is as clean and as nice as she was when she came, at least she don't feel so sore, and so dirty, and wet, and uncomfortable as I do, nor so much ashamed.

Lucy shed most bitter tears. She had not the consolation under all these accidents, of feeling that she had had good or innocent motives for wishing to wear the improper dress, and that her friends would pity her; and again she wept over her vanity, her wilfulness, her envy, and malice.

At last she heard the happy party returning to the house full of mirth and gaiety, and as they entered she heard Emily say, "I have looked all round for Lucy, I wonder where she has hidden herself; I suppose she has found something new and delightful in this charming place, but she will soon be here now, because the sun is almost down—our *happy day* is ended, for mother has ordered the carriage to be ready as soon as tea is over," and she came bounding into the house rosy and smiling with innocent delight; but her countenance became sad as she caught sight of Lucy through the open door, sobbing at the kitchen fire, in the deplorable condition which we have described her.

Emily was immediately at her side, trying with kind words and an affectionate manner, to sooth and comfort her.

She was too good-natured to tell Lucy that she suffered for her own faults, she was too kind *once* to say to her “I *told* you so, I *knew* you would be sorry, *now* don’t you wish you had done as I advised you?”—Emily did not say any thing like this; but she looked kindly at her, took hold of her hand, and wiped her eyes, and said, “come, never mind it now dear Lucy, but think of all the pleasures we have had, and what a pleasant ride home we shall have in the moon-shine—and besides, I dare say we shall be able to mend the trimming, I will help you, and see if we can’t get out these spots with Cologne water, and some of mother’s patent soap, which is made on *purpose* to take out spots from silk; come, never mind, accidents will happen, and I am so thankful that the horse did not kick you, how frightened we were when he looked so wild.”

Thus Emily kindly tried to divert poor Lucy 'till supper was ready. Now Lucy had thought a great deal about the nice supper, and the good things which she expected to see on the table, but she had cried till her stomach was sick, and her appetite quite gone ; she could not taste any of the delicacies on which she had depended so much, and besides, she did not wish to show herself before her aunt and Mrs. Russel in such a condition, so she crept into the carriage which had been drawn up to the door, and waited there till her aunt and cousin were ready.

Lucy's aunt had been told before she reached the house of what had happened, by Mr. Thomas Russel, who had gone out to meet her ; but, as he told her that Lucy was not so much hurt as she was mortified and frightened, she spared her the pain of seeing

her before company, and even after she was in the carriage, and had begun their ride home, this kind aunt said nothing about the accident; for she thought it best to let Lucy reflect in silence upon the events of the day, that the *lessons of experience* for which she had paid so very dearly, might induce her to correct those faults from which all her sufferings proceeded.

When they arrived at home, and were all collected in the parlour, Lucy's aunt desired to look at the bruises, and as she kindly bound them up, said to her,—“ You have had your first lesson of experience my dear little girl to-day ; it has indeed been a hard one, and I dare say will be long remembered ; you were much frightened, much bruised, much disappointed, and very much mortified. I am sure I am *sorry* for your sufferings, but if you will let

them convince you, that pride—malice—selfishness—wilfulness—and obstinacy, are all faults which will make you suffer more and more as long as you keep them, you may *yet* bless this day, as I shall most certainly, as the most fortunate of your life, and worth a *purse full* of such pieces as that which you have so foolishly thrown away. You start, my little girl, but I assure you that all these dreadful faults were in your heart when you determined to use your father's present as you did, and kept to that determination; for I heard all your conversation with Emily on the day it was received.

“*Pride and malice*, my dear Lucy,” continued her aunt, “induced you to desire to dress yourself so richly, to astonish your friends, and to mortify (as you thought it would) the proud Miss Prince. Selfishness made you

unwilling to part with the piece which was in fact sent to Emily, and did in no way belong to you. Wilfulness united to make you resist her advice, when she told you (and from her own experience) that you would be sorry if you dressed in this manner ; and lastly, obstinacy made you feel that you ' would rather stay at home ' than give up to my wishes and recommendation :—let *to-day's* experience be sufficient for you, and I shall truly love you ; go now, my dear, to bed.

Lucy, however, was more mortified and angry than repentant ; she had thought so little about correcting her faults, and submitting to the government of older and wiser people, that she had a great deal more to suffer before she could resolutely set about becoming docile, obedient, humble, and submissive ; she had never restrained

her inclination, or controlled any of her desires or passions, and knew very little about self government ; for no one had taught her till she came to her aunt's, that she ought to do so.

Emily's mother had done as she said she would, for she always kept her word in every thing. She had advised her about the gown she was to get for poor Nurse Hooper, the day after she had received her crown piece ; she had done more than she had promised ; she had cut and fitted the gown, and shewed Emily just how to make it all herself, so that she had double pleasure in giving it to her. It was now done and folded neatly, and Emily went with her mother to carry that, and some other little comforts, to the poor woman.

Emily's delight was full and *complete*, when she witnessed the brightened eyes and grateful countenance of Nurse

Hooper, and heard her say, that, “now again she should be able to hear her dear minister, and to thank her heavenly Father for all his mercies to her, in the Lord’s own blessed house ;” and when on the following Sabbath, Emily stood at her mother’s window, and saw the good woman walking to meeting, exactly as she had pictured her, with her psalm book and her fan nicely folded in her handkerchief, and looking so peaceful and happy, Emily thought she felt more pleasure than she had expected, and would not have exchanged her feelings, for any thing which could have been offered her.

Time passed on, and the adventures we have related were over and nearly forgotten. Lucy sometimes thought of her faults, and of the lessons which had been given her ; she sometimes thought she would try more to correct

them, to be more amiable, and good ; and when she saw how happy Emily always appeared, and how much she was beloved, she wished she too had learned to control herself, and resist temptation, that *she* might be as happy ; but she did nothing in earnest, and when temptations came, she did not try at all. Her aunt, however, continued to take the kindest care of her, she watched for every opportunity to instruct and amend her, and she hoped that her heart was a little less selfish, her temper a little more restrained, and that she began to have more fear of doing wrong, to remember more constantly that the eye of God was ever upon her, even when she was alone and in thick darkness, and could see not only what she did do, but what she even wished to do in her mind.

One morning a few months after

their ride to Brookline, while Lucy was sitting in her chamber opposite to the open door, putting together a dissected map which her father had just sent to her, she saw her aunt come up stairs and go into her own room, with a little package in her hand, wrapped in white paper and tied with twine. Lucy supposed that it had come from New York with her map, and she felt very curious to know what it could be, that her aunt had folded up so neatly in white paper. She immediately thought that her aunt had received some pretty present from New York, and she watched her to see if she opened the paper, and what she did with it, and saw that she went to her closet, stood up in a chair, and reaching to the highest shelf of her closet, opened a small trunk, and put the parcel into it; then she went to her

bureau drawer, opened that, and laid something in, shut the drawer and left the chamber.

All this puzzled Lucy exceedingly ; so she determined to ask her aunt as she went down stairs, what was in the paper, though she ought to have known it was impertinent to question her aunt about a thing which did not at all concern herself, and that she ought to restrain her curiosity.

“ Did you get that little bundle from New York, aunt ? ” said Lucy.

“ No, my dear,” replied her aunt.

“ What was in it, aunt ? ” continued the inquisitive little girl.

“ It is nothing which it concerns you in the least to know, my dear,” said her aunt ; “ nothing that would please you, or interest you in any way ; you should be less curious.”

“ I wish I could see it, though,” said

Lucy to herself, as her aunt left her, "I don't doubt papa has sent something pretty, and I think she might have shewn it to me. I can't think what it can be; it was such a nice little package, all tied up in white paper; I wonder if it was not a pair of new ear rings. I *heard* her say she needed a new set; I do *wish* I could see them."

She continued to allow her curiosity to puzzle over the little white bundle, instead of trying to forget it, till her map no longer pleased her in the least; so she left it on the table, and sauntered into her aunt's room, and would not attempt to conquer her idle curiosity, but kept wondering, and wishing to know what was in the paper, that her aunt had taken so much trouble to put up so high and so secretly. It came into her head that she might get up into

the same chair and look into the trunk ! She saw her aunt walking at the very bottom of the garden, and thought she would never know any thing about it.

Now when this thought first came into Lucy's mind, she knew it was a wicked thought, and she did not intend at first to do so very wrong a thing ; but she let it remain in her mind, and thought how easily she might do it if she pleased, till after thinking, and thinking, she determined just to try if she could reach the trunk by standing up in the chair, as her aunt had done ; so she crept softly to the closet, placed the chair and got up into it, but she was not tall enough to reach the trunk ; so she looked about to see what there was to put into the chair, and make it high enough, and she saw the little cricket on which she had been sitting

to play with her map ; so she brought that and placed it on the chair, and then she found herself quite tall enough, for she could reach the shelf with ease ; she put out her hand tremblingly, for Lucy's conscience told her plainly that she *was doing very, very wrong*, and the thought made her tremble very much, but she put out her hand and tried to open the trunk. It was locked.

“Now I do know, almost, that it was something very important, since aunt has taken such particular pains to hide it away, and very likely it is something for me too, that papa has sent me, and she won't let me even see it,” said Lucy ; “I wonder if it was not the very key to this little trunk, that she put into her bureau drawer. I saw her go there after she left the closet. If it was the key, 'tis easy enough to get it, the *bureau* is not high, I shall

not hurt the bundle just to look at it, and I don't mean to touch it; besides, she ought to have shown it to me, if my papa sent it to her."

Lucy crept down carefully from the chair and stood before the bureau—she stopped there—for something said to her that "she was sinning;" but she did not turn resolutely away and busy herself about something else—she did not fly from temptation—but kept thinking that she might easily enough open the drawer, and see if it really was the key which her aunt had put there; till at last she said to herself, "there is no harm in just seeing if the key is in here, I am not obliged to touch it."

She gently opened the drawer; the little key lay down in front, so that she could reach it without opening the drawer any wider. She stood look-

ing awhile—and then this temptation also was too strong; she slipped in her hand and took up the key to see if it was the very same; having it in her hand she no longer hesitated, but once more got upon the chair and put the key into the lock—she turned it—the trunk was opened—and Lucy saw the little package tied up in its white paper, laying in one corner.

O, why did not she then stop and sin no more. Alas! when we go so far wrong it is hard to find the right path back; every step we take renders return more difficult. Lucy had now gone so far out of the path of duty, that she no more thought of any thing but satisfying her curiosity. She took up the parcel, and untied the string; but what can express her great disappointment when she found it contained—only a little white sugar,

as she thought it was. Lucy loved sugar, and had often taken a little pinch from the sugar dish on the table, and as she had untied the paper, thought she would just taste a little before she did it up again ; she took a pinch of the sugar and was beginning to fold up the paper.

But all this had taken much more time than Lucy had expected ; and before she could get it folded up, as she had found it, she heard her aunt on the stairs. And now that the poor girl was likely to be *caught* doing this naughty thing, she felt *all at once* how *very* bad it was ; she was *dreadfully* frightened at the thought of her aunt's finding her in such a guilty situation, and she tried to jump down quickly, but in doing so, her sleeve caught in the fatal key, pulled over the trunk with all its contents upon her ; the

cricket was unsteady in the chair, it was jostled by her agitation, and Lucy, the cricket, and the trunk, all came together upon the floor with a loud noise.—Her aunt was just then at the door ; she was greatly alarmed by the crash, but her fright was intolerable when she entered the chamber ; the first glance told her what had happened.

“ O, my poor child,” said she, “ have you *tasted it*,” for the paper of sugar lay scattered all around the floor. Lucy was in such pain she could not answer, but the sugar on her mouth spoke for her,—“ Oh run, run quickly for the Doctor,” said her aunt, “ she has tasted the arsenic !—she is poisoned !”

The servant who had been alarmed at the noise, and was with her in the chamber, went instantly for the Doctor. Poor Lucy, though she was suffering

dreadfully from a broken leg, heard all her aunt had said, and she was certain she had spoke the truth, her countenance was so full of pity and of fright ; she well knew what she suffered on her account. Lucy thought she must surely die, and to die in the very moment when she was sinning so sadly, to die in consequence of her own wicked conduct, to die in such agonies and convulsions as this poison produces—how shocking ! she was already in so much distress from her broken leg, that it was exceedingly difficult to get her on the bed. No one who has not been so unfortunate as to break a bone, can tell how very painful it is.

At last the Doctor came ; but before he could set the bone and relieve the distress in which poor Lucy lay, he said “ he must give her most disagreeable medicines, for he feared he might

already be too late.” No one could tell how much or how little she had taken of the arsenic, because it was all spilled from the paper and mixed with other things ; so the Doctor gave her the most powerful emetics. Fortunately for Lucy she had spilled the most of the poison as she carried it to her mouth and had but tasted it, so that the immediate attention prevented her suffering so much from that as was expected ; but the fright and the pain she endured, and the quantities of medicine she took, all united to confine her a long time, and made her suffer prodigiously. Lucy remained some months very feeble ; she lost much of the beauty which she had prized so highly. She was but the shadow of herself. The hours of penitence and sorrow she had passed—the tears of grief which had flowed for

her many transgressions during this long confinement had reduced her strength, but they purified her heart, her repentance was sincere and her amendment sure, because she was now in earnest.

One day while her affectionate aunt was sitting beside her, Lucy looked into her mild, patient, and benevolent face, bent over her in tenderness and pity; and her little heart which had been almost bursting with its load of grief, could no longer contain its emotion. “Oh, my dear, *kind*, forgiving aunt,” said she, “I do hope this last dreadful lesson of experience will make me a better girl. I would not learn from you, though you talked to me so very kindly and so often too. Nor when I suffered so much from my foolish and wicked conduct about the dress, that disagreeable day at Brookline. You shewed me then as clear as day, the

lesson my heavenly Father was teaching me, by all the bad accidents I met with and all the shame I felt; but I soon forgot all that—though you told me that if I did not correct my faults with a little suffering, something worse would be sent to me. And now my great sins have brought this great punishment. Oh my dear aunt,” continued Lucy, sobbing with deep repentance, “tell me, shall I forget this too?—shall I forget how patiently you have watched by me all through my sickness, and how kindly you have spoken to me, just as if I had not brought it all on myself—and though I have often, very often been cross to Emily, and never liked to share any of my good things with her, she has left all her companions, and all her plays and pleasures to come and sit up in this dark, dull room, to amuse me and wait upon me—shall

I—can I forget all this as I did the other things?”

“No my dear, penitent girl,” said her aunt, kissing her affectionately, “you have indeed paid most dearly, (as I have feared you would) for your instruction, I rejoice to see that you are determined to improve by these painful lessons, they will not I am sure be lost upon you; God has mercifully spared your life. When I think of your dreadful fall, and all the circumstances of that sad day, I am truly astonished that you have lived through them all, that your neck as well as your limbs was not broken; and when I remember the chance there was of your taking so much of that horrible poison into your stomach, as would have rendered all medicines useless, I shudder at the thought; you have felt the danger, and have suffered much pain—you know

your own faults have caused it all—you say you repent, and if you do so sincerely you will amend.”

“Oh, I do, I do repent,” sobbed Lucy.”

“Then be comforted my love—you will amend, and be forgiven, I am certain, and we shall all have reason to rejoice with you, and bless these distressing but most useful lessons of *experience*.







